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IN
THE PROMISED LAND.

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IN
THE PROMISED LAND
AND
OTHER POEMS

✓
BY MICHAEL LYNCH.



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TO
DOUGLAS HYDE, ESQ., LL.D.,
WHO HAS STRIVEN SO EARNESTLY TO BREATHE
LIFE INTO A STRANGLED LITERATURE
AND A DYING TONGUE,
THIS BOOK
IS
RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED
BY
THE AUTHOR.

*Poets there are who of the Muses ask
To babble only of the fields and flowers ;
Have they their way ; be mine the sterner task
To sing of man in sweet and bitter hours,*

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IN THE PROMISED LAND.

—:o:—

So we sailed and sailed over stormy seas, till we came to
a pleasant land,
Where forever were peace and happiness, and plenty was
on each hand;
And no man wronged his brother there, for no man
counted it gain
To live by the sweat of another's brow, or to joy at an-
other's pain.

And the strong man there was a kindly man, and aided
the one who was weak,
And for those who were simple and trusting men, their
wiser brothers would speak;
And creed, or color, or land, or birth, caused no man to
hate another.
For the same red blood filled each man's veins, and every
man was a brother.

And toil in that land was a pleasant thing, for no man's
toil was great,
Since each one shared in the burden, and lightened the
the burden's weight ;
And the fruits of their toil were plentiful, and no man
lacked a share,
For the spoiler reaped not where the toiler had sowed,
and the land was as free as air.

And the old man there was a blessed man, for, toilless he
wanted nought,
And vice and toil on the little ones, no longer their ruin
wrought ;
And the feeble in body and mind had there no longer a
care for bread ;
For out of the plenty that was for all, 'twas theirs the
first to be fed.

And oh ! but that land was a happy land for those who
were sisters of men,
For them was no rude and unseemly toil, in field or in
sweater's den ;
They pawned not body and soul for bread, for woman
felt woman's shame,
And dearer than life to the strong man was the good of
his sister's name.

And the fields were yellow with harvesting where every
man might reap,
And the fishful rivers went singing down through that
land to the mighty deep

And the mountains were clothed with forests, and the orchards were ripe with fruit,
And the breath of the kine like incense arose, in the meadows still green afoot.

And winter, that tyrant of other lands, had here no terrors at all,
For lacking nothing of food or fire, they laughed and they let him brawl;
And summer nor parched nor favored them since little they toiled in the sun,
For the soulless engine was now man's slave, and worked while he rested on.

And peace was forever in that fair land, for no man envied his mate,
And no man's treasures, where all were rich, woke his brother's sleeping hate,
And the kingdom that Christ had promised, was now for all men to see
And the name of that happy kingdom was, "The land of the soon to be."

THE KING'S JESTER.

Here to his face I do proclaim this king
To be a lying and a shameless thing,
A knave who basely robbed me of my wife,
Took from me all that I held dear in life;
Made me—Nay, sire, and you most gracious lords,
I pray you be not angry at my words,
I did but jest, it is my task ye know,
When most ye grieve my wildest mirth to show;
And well I know how deeply ye do mourn
The loss of her this day to burial borne,
Who was the royal love. Yet since too bold
My words may seem the tale were best untold;
And so, most gracious lords, I pardon ask,
And will another way fulfill my task :
There was a king—we'll say in ancient Greece—
Who o'er a happy land long reigned in peace,—
This king for queen possessed a gentle wife,
Who loved him dearer than she loved her life ;
Sons had she borne to him—a stalwart three,
And two fair daughters knelt beside his knee ;

Yet with these treasures was he not content,
For one day wearied with the chase and spent,
Alone he halted at a poor knight's door
And called for drink. From out his little store
The honored gentleman with anxious haste,
A stoop of wine before his liege lord placed.
Of this the king partook and turned to go,
When chanced it with an obeisance low,
The other's wife did pass. How gentle, kind,
And more than fair she was, or how enshrined
Within her husband's breast, and there did reign
I will not say, for speech were all in vain
Such joy to tell; yet, still most gracious lords,
This mighty king, with sweet and honeyed words
Stayed her in going, and with scanty grace,
Soon clasped her trembling in his rude embrace.
At this the woman screaming with affright,
Called on her husband who, poor foolish wight,
Leaped on the pair and with a desperate grasp,
His struggling wife tore from the false king's clasp.
The king drew sword, the other sword had none,
Matched 'gainst an unarmed foe the monarch won,
Bore off his victim whilst the other lay
Wounded and bleeding senseless on the clay.
Well, time passed on and she who wept at first,
And in her heart a wife's affection nursed,
Did prove untrue, and soon, too soon, became
His queen in all except his queen in name;
His true queen died, some said her heart had burst,
His children far in foreign lands dispersed,
His faithful councillors in shame withdrew,
His people murmured, yet he nought did rue,

For still despite the obloquy he gained,
His mistress and his loyal lords remained.
Nay, good my liege, consider I do jest,
And you sweet lords be patient, hear the rest,
My tale's but short, and soon will have an end,
'Tis but to tell ye how a faithful friend
Nursed the poor husband till his wounds were healed,
And then the fulness of his shame revealed,
So that one day made mad by the report,
Through guarded ways he burst upon the court,
And leaping up to where—by the king's side
His false wife sat he clutched at her and cried : —
“ O king I come to claim from you my wife——,”
A hundred swords leaped forth to drink his life.
For in such warfare every lord was bold,
Had not the king, their master, cried them “Hold !”
What, would ye sirs this wretched madman stay ?
‘Fie, fie, for shame. Put up your swords I say,
We fear him not. What—rascal ! this thy wife,
And thou no madman art. Why, by my life !
Thy wit is excellent ; and surely knave,
Should win for thee a recompense more brave
Than did these lords intend. Well, so be it,
Have thou thy way. Yet, since we like thy wit,
And do desire for thee some fit reward,
Henceforth be jester thou, to me, thy lord,
Go where thou wilt. Nay sirs, we do not fear
Treason in any—peasant or in peer,
And as for words, why, truly, this blunt knave
Is like, indeed, to prove no flattering slave,
Yet will we curb him not, though he do cry,
He is this lady's rightful lord, not I.

His words will but amuse.—What—pale my love?
Fie, fie for shame! I thought thou wert above
So base a fear. Nay then, my arm. Sweet lords,
I pray you pardon, but this madman's words
Hath somewhat discomposed our lady dear,
We will retire and leave him with you here,
Perchance tomorrow after needed rest
She'll learn with me to think it but a "jest,"
So, whilst his leman he bore trembling off
The husband dragged below was forced to doff
His own mean garments and was soon arrayed
With cap and bell in suit of motley shade;
But on the next day, and the next, and next,
And so for weary months with brow unvext,
Or so did seem, by aught of fear or shame,
As neither did she teel, the haughty dame
Passed him unblenching by; Yea; would engage
In mirth with others when with frantic rage,
He madly dashed upon the circling swords
That did protect her lover and his lords.
Not all his tears could draw from her one tear,
Not even his prayers did she pretend to hear,
Nor yet the faith she once to him had vowed,
And sworn to keep could make her seem less proud.
He was so low, her lover was so high—
He was so weak, none dared the king defy,
He was so hateful, she did often pray
That death might snatch him from her sight away.
And death did come! But not as she had prayed
Heaven was above them and was not afraid
To grant the justice that the earth denied,
For in the very midst of all her pride,

When most she seemed secure the hand of death
Was laid upon her, and his stagnant breath
Blown to her vitals. Vainly then she cried
To Heaven for mercy—Heaven and earth denied
Her every anguished prayer that she might live !
Not even the king, her lover, hope could give,
But shrieking, maddened, frantic with affright,
Her troubled spirit from the earth took flight,
Then mark you, most gracious lords, when she was dead
Her husband came and stood beside her bed ;
There was no scorn upon her white lips now,
There was no stain upon her marble brow,
No cold disdain, no swelling look of pride,
For all that evil was in her had died.
But there she lay as innocent and sweet
In seeming, as when first their looks did meet,
And all the old fond love for her that he thought dead
Crept back again, and kneeling by her bed,
He kissed her tenderly. Then mark you this,
An oath he took 'twixt every tender kiss
To be revenged on him who had to her
Brought ruin, death and shame. Nay ! do not stir
Most gracious king and lords, I've but to tell
How e'er for her had ceased the funeral bell.
The husband strode to where, dissolved in tears,
The grieving king sat circled by his peers,
And drew his dagger—thus—stand back my lords !
By Heaven ! I do not fear your sharpest swords,
Strike if ye dare ! but I will strike the first,
And thou, false king, adulterous and accurst,
If thou canst, pray, for thy last hour has come,
Nay ! do not think to thus escape thy doom,
I spurn they offer ! 'tis the Judas kiss !
Thus, thus I strike, take this—and this—and this.

A FRONTIER BRIDAL NIGHT.

We started away from the parson's house, my fair young
 wife and I,
To where her father's cabin stood, on the banks of the
 Oseemi;
We were the happiest couple that had ever sat side by
 side,
Or so I thought, as I looked down to the blushing face
 of my bride.

I had loved her long and not vainly, for she had re-
 turned my love ;
But her father, rather a proud old chap, who thought
 himself somewhat above
The rest of our village people, because we had called him
 squire,
Said : "Young man, I hope you don't forget that you're
 working for me for hire."

Then I looked kind of angry-like and he looked kind of
ashamed,
And said: "Now John, don't mistake me, I don't mean
that you're to be blamed
For being in love with my Mary, but you see it's a thing
I can't stand,
To have my daughter married to a chap 'thout an acre of
land."

So, like Jacob of old, I toiled for him through seven long
weary years,
Seven years to me of bitterness, and seven to Mary of
tears,
Till at length, one winter evening, as we sat round the
blazing log fire,
With a last look into her blue eyes, again I asked the old
squire.

He turned sorter red and flushed-like, as if 'twas a kind
of a surprise,
And looked straight at me and at Mary, and I thought
there was tears in his eyes;
Then he took one of her white hands in his, and said
kinder soft-like to me,
"We've spoken 'bout this thing before, John, and I said
then it wasn't to be.

"But times have wonderful changed since then, and I've
changed with 'em, too;
And it's often I've thought since then, John, that I
didn't do right by you:

You had worked for me long and faithful, and I knew
you were good and kind ;
And, as for this love of yours, I knew you were both of
the self-same mind.

“So I hadn’t oughter refused you ; but I was a leetle bit
riled,
To think of your wanting Mary, and she being my eldest
child,
The one of all others I loved the best, the one I most
wanted to see
Married to some rich settler, and a pride to her mother
and me.

“But she would have none of my choosing, I suppose
’twas from thinking of you,
And so, if she’s willing, take her, and my blessing along
with her, too.
And the minute the parson says the words, and Mary and
you is one,
I’ll give you a share of what is mine, as is fitting ’twixt
father and son.”

So we thanked him then for his kindness, but he rose
without saying a word,
And left us alone together, kind of dazed like by what
we had heard ;
It had come so sudden upon us, after waiting so many
long years,
That it needn’t surprise ye, boy, to know that we shed
that night happy tears.

Well, there warn't no parson near our place, and so we'd
to be content,
With driving 'bout twenty miles away, to the Methodist,
"Parson Bert."
That night, when the moon was shining from above in the
clear blue sky,
O'er the snow-clad plains we rode away, Mary, my wife
and I.

And my heart was filled with a blessed joy, as we sat
there side by side,
When I thought how I'd prayed for this long years, and
my prayer seemed ever denied ;
But now my heart hunger was ended, and Mary I knew
was my own,
And that nothing could ever part us again, excepting
'twas death alone.

I warn't in no talking humor, and she never was much
with the tongue,
And so we sat silent, rejoicing, whilst our horses gal-
loped along ;
When all of a sudden, a long, low howl, came floating
up on the wind,
In a minute I knew what that cry meant—there was
wolves on our track behind.

Oh, boy, what a terrible feeling then like fire rushed
through my veins,
When first I heard those critters' howls away behind on
the plains ;

It warn't that I keered so much for myself, though I'd
set a new value on life,
But I thought of the wolves and their ravening jaws,
and then I thought of my wife.

Poor gal, she sat trembling beside me, for she, too, had
heard that cry,
And one who had lived on the frontier so long must
know it meant danger nigh;
But as she said nothing, I kept still, for I hadn't the
heart to speak,
When I saw that all the sweet blushes had faded away
from her cheek.

So we sat for a long hour in silence; but that dreadful
cry from behind,
Seemed every minute nearer, though our horses were
speeding like wind;
But all was in vain—for sudden, a huge wolf leaped by
my side;
In a minute they all were around us, with smoking red
jaws opened wide.

Some leaped at the throats of our horses, and some
sprang up at the sleigh,
But dropping the reins into Mary's hands, I managed to
keep them at bay,
And laid on the whip to our horses till the poor things
screamed with affright;
But swifter than we the wolves rushed on—Oh God!
'twas a terrible sight.

With long, gaunt limbs and lolling tongues, with red
eyes flashing fire,
Like a furious troop of devils they seemed, as their
howling rose higher and higher,
And around and around us they circled, till at length we
had reached the pine wood,
That stretched along by the river-bank, where the squire's
old cabin stood.

We wern't now more than a mile away, and I felt kind
of hopeful like then,
For I thought we might yet reach the village, before
they'd attack us again ;
But our horses were soon stagg'ring blindly, and twice
they were brought to their knees,
And the blood rushed down from their wounded sides
and reddened our track through the trees.

Each minute they seemed to grow weaker, each minute
they slackened in pace,
And showed by their heavy breathing that they'd soon
have to give up the race.
Unless—Thank Heaven ! I had it. Should their bur-
den be lessened by one,
And that one for a while could stay the wolves, perhaps
they might yet keep on !

Yes, one of us two must stay behind, and die in the
woods that night,
And, well—I had sworn to protect her, and I was most
able to fight

And so, I must meet my fate like a man, not feeling that
death was a pain,
Since my dying might bring her to life, and hope, and
friendship, and home again.

But, boy, I know if I'd do the deed, it must of a sudden
be done,
A leap, and a shout, and a wild Godspeed, and she alone
would ride on ;
For never, I knew, would her true heart consent to be
parted from me !
And so I must sudden do the deed, and wait not for her
to agree.

Well, just as I turned round to kiss her, preparing to
take my leap,
She rose, and with sudden motion sprang out, falling all
of a heap.
A minute I stood as if blinded, and then came the voice
of my wife,
"Drive for your life, John ! I am your wife, John,
drive, drive on for your life !"

She had done the deed I was thinking, and courted her
death to save me,
And I stood a-trembling all over to think what her fate
now must be ;
Next minute I'd leaped down beside her, and turning
around faced the pack
Of howling and yelling demons, that when she had
fallen turned back.

With the butt of a heavy whip I struck, one falling at
every fierce blow,
Whilst Mary knelt praying beside me, that Heaven
would mercy bestow,—
And before it was too late send assistance, from the vil-
lage whose lights I could see,
But it seemed like her prayers were unanswered, and the
struggle depended on me.

At length I could hold out no longer, and bleeding and
torn backward fell,
And could feel that the wolves rushed in on us, with a
savage and deafening yell.
Then, just as I thought all was over, came the aid that
we so long had craved —
First a shot, then a shout, then a scampering—we were
saved, Oh God ! we were saved.

THE LEGEND OF ST. ELOI.

Christ taught in parables and so did they
Who sought the rude barbarian's soul to sway;
But this forgotten by the modern wise—
The lesson's naught since parables are lies.

Three days had passed, since good St. Eloi slept
The sleep of death, and still his people wept
The loss of him they would have died to save
From out the cruel embrace of the grave.
But he was dead, and they had laid away
In mother earth his cold and senseless clay;
And jewels rare and ornaments of gold
They buried with him in the churchyard mold;
For rich and poor, alike, their treasures gave
With loving hearts to decorate his grave;

And when their last sad task was at an end,
And they had looked their last upon the friend
They ne'er would see again, with faltering tread
Each homeward turned and left behind the dead.
Next day it chanced as one meek soul intent
On offered prayer, into the churchyard went
And would have knelt her down beside the grave
Of him who yesterday to earth they gave,
Had not she seen there sight that her amazed ;
For lo ! the tomb but yesternight, upraised
By pious hands, and with such blessings crowned,
Now lay in broken fragments on the ground,
And still more strange, upon the coffin prone
And with the dead man's arms about him thrown,
Lay gibbering there a wretched sordid knave,
Who would for gold have rifled thus the grave ;
Had not the power of Christ the ever blest,
By so strange means in bondage him impressed.
Straight at her cry of wonder and amaze
The 'larumed villagers an hundred ways
Came crowding in ; whereat the dead man's arms
Slowly their firm grasp loosed and his white palms
Crossed as before upon his clay-cold breast,
From which the thief had risen pale, distrest ;
And trembling with a thousand bitter fears
Of death, that spite his supplicating tears,
They would have dealt him, aye, with tortures too,
Such as the law in those old times well knew ;
Had not he fled again to those cold arms
That opened wide to shield him from all harms.
Straight at this miracle that so surpassed
All forms of old belief, they stood aghast ;

Daring not speech, and motionless until
The white lips opened that were late so still
And said, "Have ye not heard me often say
How God, though just, yet mercy loves alway ;
And now, oh creatures of a little time !
Would ye the penalty exceed the crime ?
And for the theft of that which else must waste
Do greater wrong in your unthinking haste.
This man hath sinned, but blessed God on high
That ever watcheth with a sleepless eye,
Hath him o'ertaken in his act of sin
And punished as ye see ; his crime hath been
In God's sight grievous, but did ye not too
Do equal wrong with him, since well ye knew
The gold ye lavished on this senseless clay
Was meant for ye to use another way ;
Forever in your midst have ye the poor
Who lacking this must many wants endure.
Even this poor wretch ; whose sin hath been so great.
By your temptation fell ; ye knew his 'state,—
How many and how grievous were his needs ;
Yet could ye wickedly thus sow the seeds
In him of grievous wrong by placing thus
Almost within his reach such perilous
And tempting sin ; therefore, do ye not dare
To sit in judgment when ye guilt did share,
But let him go unharmed, with ye to pray
That God above may wash your sins away,
And know ye this : He loves not the abuse
Of wealth He gave that ye should rightly use ;
But holds him dearer who by love would win
Than him who hates the sinner more than sin."

THE ALCHEMIST.

[Whereby, it followed, many sought to prolong this earthly life. Yea, even to eternity. But a subtle foe is death, and constantly evaded their intioned harms, so that to some came failure through defective skill, to others through the pressing pangs of poverty, and, yet again, still more through the sudden onset of that death they would have stayed.]—Paracelsus.

My curse upon ye, rabble that ye are,
Famines and plagues burst on ye from afar
And strange diseases eat into your bones,
Until ye grow as senseless as the stones
Ye fling at me in scorn. But ye will die,
And I, not hearkening to your doleful cry,
Will see ye waste by slow degrees away,
Till nought is left of ye in your decay.
Yea! I will see ye even at this door
Crawl in the dust and beg a morsel more
Of this sweet life, that I alone can give,
For, know ye base deriders, who would live
Throughout all time must beg the gift of me,
For I have strength and skill wherewith to—see
What this vial hath; its smallest drop
Laid on your scoffing tongues would instant stop

All process of decay, and your uncouth
 And labor-twisted forms would their green youth
 And blooming strength renew ; but now—aye ! shout,
 Mock and deride me as ye will ; cry out
 Magician, witch or demon, what ye will,
 I care not, neither do I fear your skill.
 In torturing, for huuger, rack or fire
 Will harmless prove to me, who have a higher
 And more potent strength than theirs, so, base born
 That ye are, I fling at ye my hate and scorn
 And go ; but going, doom ye with this breath
 To sink forever, soon, in endless death.

* * * * *

My chair, alas ! how weak is this old frame.
 Gray haired and feeble, bent and blind and lame,
 I seem, indeed, a thing unfit to live ;
 Yea, were it not that gracious God doth give
 To all my fellowmen through me a sweet
 And strengthening hope, Him could I wish to meet
 Ere yet the day is done. Ah me ! how thrills
 Already through my veins the damps and chills
 Of the declining day ; and this old room
 Methinks is filled with an unwonted gloom.
 Now faint and fainter yet, and dim, more dim
 All things do seem to grow ; my senses swim,
 Ha ! let me the potion drink ere my last breath
 Be drawn from me away. There, now, O Death,
 I do defy thee. Never more, thou fell
 And knavish ravager of earth will swell
 The anguished cry of those thou hast bereft
 Of all most dear to them by thy foul theft

Of this most blessed life ; no more wilt thou
See all of earth at thy stern mandate bow.
And thou that since the first birth of old time
Hath life pursued through every age and clime,
And old and young slew with remorseless hate,
Thou, too, must bow before all-conquering fate.
Yea, and though still thou struggle on and on,
It will avail thee naught, thy strength is gone ;
Thy blasting breath no more hath power to harm,
For with this potent and all-healing balm
I will so strengthen men that thou wilt seek,
In vain a victim whereupon to wreak
Thy hatred, malice, and devouring lust,
To change all forms of life to lifeless dust.
Hark ! Nay, it is nothing but the rabble low,
That clamor at my door and do bestow
Whatever of obscene and scornful names
The foul imagination of each frames.
Well, so be it. I murmur not, yet, still
I do remember when with little skill
By God's most gracious favor it might chauce
That my poor simples could in aught advance
Their lease of life, how they did greet my name
Above all measures of deserved fame,
Yea, and the mercy that they owed to God
They did ascribe to me, the earth I trod
Seemed sacred ground and men with lowly knee
Bowed down and thankful homage did to me.
But, that did pass, for when I grew at length
Wearied at struggling with my poor weak strength
Against what seemed inevitable fate
And sought whereby I might perpetuate

This blessed life, so none of men might die.
Then did they turn against me and decry
My every effort for their good, because
I dared not even for one moment pause
In my great task lest death should overtake
Me in my labors, and at once unmake
All I would have accomplished, and again
His rule be lengthened, strengthened, amongst men.
Yet did their rage not move me, nor their cries
Of sad entreaty, that fell likewise
On ears that now unto their bitter grief
Seemed all unheedful, for no more relief
My skill did give, the plague and pestilence
Did come, and in the agony intense
Of dread disease they prayed me not disdain
Their depths of misery and bitter pain.
Yea! and with eyes that burned into my breast,
They knelt before me, but could I so rest
From my great task, or for these stricken few
Endanger that which I for all might do?
No! though my heart with keener pangs was rent
Than those that seemed to them such punishment,
For how could I, who loved my kind so well,
See where its noblest and its bravest fell?
And feel not grieved that in despite of all
My toil seemed vain; then age did on me fall,
And I grew feeble, old and bent and gray,
And hopeless nigh till that eventful day,
That day of days, when, like a breath from heaven,
The great thought come for which I had so striven;
And going forth among my fellow men,
I told them all, and—was bemocked again.

Yet, though I, bitterly in anger, vowed
That I to death would leave them all—the proud
And great, the mightiest of all this land,
As well as the poor knave, who raised his hand
At me, unknowing what he did. Yet now
I do repent me of my foolish vow,
And will, with Heaven's most sweet and saving grace,
Leave not unaided one of all my race.
Yea!—and to man, however, base or mean,
No more will death untimely intervene
Betwixt him and repentance; nor will dread
Of an eternity of torture shed
O'er all earth's 'habitants its baleful gloom
And dire presaging of immortal doom.
And even what of evils hath this earth
I, too, will banish, for this nobler birth
And entrance into all-eternal life,
I, who its giver am, will so ordain that strife
And sorrow and penurious want
Will ne'er the high aspiring spirit daunt.
No more will earth re-echo to the groans
Of tortured millions; nor will now the thrones
Of proud potentiaries, their gauded state
And armed retinues, press mountain weight
On toil and lowly industry, nor now
Will truth to falsehood in abasement bow,
Nor right to might, nor man to fellow man,
For wide o'er earth, wherever eye may scan,
There will be naught but happiness and peace,
And sweet contentedness that will not cease.
For in possession of this blessed boon
Of life eternal, time will fly so soon

That ages long will be as moments were,
Year then on year will pass, and yet not stir
Within one bosom a regretful sigh
For the long centuries that quickly fly ;
Age upon age, from time's unnumbered store,
Will quickly fly, and yet will time no more
Bring change or sorrow to this world of ours,
For man, whose life hath fleeting been as flowers
That bloom but a short day, will now live on
Till this age-wrinkled earth itself be gone.
And thou, oh moon ! and ye eternal spheres
Of light and beauty, though unnumbered years
Ye yet roll on, no more will ye behold
In so few years mortality grow old.
No more will ye, ye ever beaming host,
In your eternal and calm beauty boast
Of longer life than ours. Cold, cold were ye
Who yet could live through all eternity,
Whilst we whose slightest thought outstripped your
flight,
Where faint and far within the sun's spent light,
Ye wandered darkling on, we, we must die.
Vain from the earth arose each anguished cry,
No tears could death delay, no anguish save
The best and wisest from the yawning grave.
But now, in base submission must we bow
To thee, oh Death ! no more. The hero's brow
May wear the martial wreath, not marble cold,
That did but mock at him beneath the mold;
Who could not thee resist. The poet, too,
Will lie no more beneath the sod and dew,
Unknown, forgotten, whilst for aye is sung

His thrilling verse, by lips of old and young.
The toiling peasant, and the wise grown sage,
May in their chosen labors each engage,
And have no dread of thee. All who live,
And would unto their fellow-creatures give
The smallest share of happiness and joy,
Will now have fame, without its base alloy
Of envy and regret. Yea! even I,
Whom men have greeted with a mocking cry
Of scorn and contumely will live to see
These men bow down to me a reverent knee,
And call me great, the savior of mankind.
Yea! with repentant tears beseech their blind
And senseless hatred be forgiven them,
So will my glory grow; nor diadem,
Nor painted trappings need proclaim my worth
To all the boundaries of this wide earth.
All peopled lands, all ages yet to be
Will greet my name with reverence;—ah me!
In my alarm I did not think to say
The charmed words the sage from far-away
Chaldea, bid me not forget; and all
My cherished hopes most miserably fall
In headlong ruin down. Oh! Gracious God,
Thou heavily hath laid Thy chastening rod
On Thy poor servant's shoulders old and weak.
Oh! Thou sweet Savior, I do now bespeak
Thy provident regard. Grant me, I pray,
But life enough to live another day,
Wherein I may my elixir prepare;
Grant me, I pray Thee, from Thy tender care
One moment. Ha—there may perchance remain

A drop within the vial. No, 'tis vain
And hope is useless, for with every breath
I feel how near to me approaches death.
Fall, fall ye heavens. In your wide embrace
Crush out this earth, oh ! hide ye every trace
Of its abounding misery and woe.
And thou sweet nature, do thou not bestow,
On man the power to propagate his kind;
For it were better in oblivion blind
All earth should rest, than that a life so short
Should make of us the mockery and sport
Of fate now all resistless. Come then, Death,
And blast me with thy all infecting breath ;
Leave not a circumstance of torturing pain,
But let all horrors follow in thy train ;
And come. O spare thou not. Have thou on me
No mercy, for I none do ask of thee.
Do as thou wilt—I can no more prolong
The struggle against thee. Though yet so strong
Is love of live within my aching breast
That I would give up all my hopes of rest
Might I but live. Time hath so many years—
And mine have been so few and full of tears,
And now I must depart. Yea, when I know
What years of happiness I did forego
I cannot them recall. I cannot live,
Or have that life I did think once to give
To all my fellow-creatures of this earth.
Oh, might I die and once again have birth,
Might I inhabit the most brutish form
That life or instinct ever yet did warm,
I then might be content. All things that live,

Save men, are happy, and do praises give
In their unthinking way to gracious God ;
The meanest worm that under foot is trod
Hath life as well as we, but has no dread
Of that great moment when earth's many dead,
Will welcome it to dust. The worthless weed
That at the breath of winter doth recede
Back to its primal dust hath life again.
The seasons come and go, but unto men
Comes never change, delivery or hope ;
Even I, who solely amongst men might cope
With this devouring death, though length of years
And sad misfortunes and my bitter fears
Threw all away. And this green earth will be
As I were not with never chance to see
What else I might.—Ah me ! there is no light—
All, all is dark—a gloom as of the night
Hath come upon me now ; no sound I hear,
Not even the church bells that upon my ear
Were wont to fall so sweetly. Cold, so cold,
I feel death's arms about me fold ;
They drag me down and I would fain not go.
Oh mercy, mercy, death ! do thou bestow
A week upon me, or a day, an hour,
Let me at least have respite from thy power
Till I can leave as legacy to man .
The means whereby to 'scape thy dreadful ban ;
Have thou but patience—do one moment wait—
No, no ; all's useless, 'tis too late—late—late.

DESPAIR.

A COMMON STORY.

I waken from sleep in the night, and find you crying, my
dear,
Find you crying for me, and you never caused me a tear.
You weep not for griefs of your own, but that I could
have fallen so low,
And I weep along with you, too, that I could have caused
you such woe.
What is a man's weak will, when a habit destroying as
sin
Clutches and drags him down, and he struggles, but cannot
win ?
Struggles, but knows he will fail, yet never to struggle
will cease,
Though knowing to struggle and fail will never bring to
him peace.
Many against the destroyer have never struggled at all,
But fell at its first approach, and never grieved at the
fall,

Contented so day by day they might quench the terrible
thirst

That tomorrow with strength renewed would hasten the
ending accurs'd ;

And many around me I see, who struggle and still strug-
gle on ;

And conquering rise at the last from the grasp of the
fiend dead and gone,—

Rise to a better life, the hope of which never they lost,
Contented to win in the end, no matter what meanwhile
the cost.

But I was like neither of these : no willing victim was I ;
Though the flesh of my body was weak, the spirit within
bade me try

And, though chained by the weight of the flesh, my
spirit would faint by the road,

I ever would rise again, and drag on the terrible load,
Drag on the load in vain, for strive and strive as I might,
Ever the strength of the flesh would conquer the spirit
in fight.—

Oh ! valiant is he who fights ; and conqueror is of his foe,
But valianter oftener is he who sinks 'neath his oppo-
nent's blow.—

But what is my sorrow for this, when always your grief
I see ?

And what is my grief for this, to the grief that you feel
for me ?

Mine alone is the guilt, and mine alone is the blame,
But you who are guiltless of all, feel more than my sor-
row and shame

Wretched and evil am I, but an angel from heaven are
you,

Fated to shed sad tears for the worst of the devil's crew,
 Fated to live with a brute, who will drink himself into a
 beast;

And yet such a love is yours; that it falters not in the
 least.

Oh! when I think of the grief I have caused you so many
 long years,

Why can't I curse and die? why can't I conquer my
 fears,

And plunge at once to the end? Better it were to be
 so,

Than to live like a wretch in shame, to you but a source
 of woe.

You say you have hope of me yet, but I have no hope at
 at all

As I began, I will end, only the deeper to fall.—

Curses be on the laws! curses be on them, I say,

That will hold to my lips the cup I am strengthless to
 push away,—

That will murder the man who drugs his brother to sud-
 den death,

But will charter another to poison that brother at every
 breath.—

What are your theatre woes where death by poison or
 steel

Is cleverly mimicked for hire, to the tortures that nightly
 I feel

When waking from drunken sleep? Oh! would I might
 never awake,

Stupidly watching the dawn in through the window
 break,

Wondering where I am, till all of a sudden the shame

That is constantly with me now, whispers me what I
am ;
And then, through the long, long hours' you, lying still
by my side,
Trying to stifle your sobs, trying your grief to hide,
Trying, as best you can, not to add to my grief ;
And I weep along with you too, but that brings me no
relief ;
And then when at length you speak, not with reproach
as you should,
But pitiful, soft and mild, as ever a woman could,
Not even pleading with me, that is long since gone by
But just as I know you would, if both were condemned
to die,
Just as I know they did, who, doomed by the heathenish
laws,
Were flung for their faith in Christ to the wild beast's
ravening maws.
Ah ! theirs was a blessed death, and blessed were they
who fell,
Conquering was their cause, and their death sounded the
knell
Of the false god's reign on earth ; but where was to any
the gain
For all of our sorrow here ? or who is made strong by
our pain ?
God, you say is all-wise, and God, you say is all-good,
And He hath the power to stay all evil things, if He
would.
Why, then, doth evil exist ? why is the devil so
strong ?

Why, if He loves the right, doth He not destroy the
wrong?

Such is His wisdom, you say. I know not; perhaps, it
is so.

But I know that His wisdom has brought to me only
shame and woe.

'Tis easy to say, have faith. I've been through it all, I
say,

But why was I born without strength to drive the
tempter away?

Why was I born at all, if shame was to be my lot?

Shame, an Almighty God could will to be or be not?

He will have mercy you say. Soon may it come it I
pray.

Soon may it be His will that I be taken away.

Away from this world where I have been but a curse and
a shame

To those that were blood of my blood, to those that were
one of my name

Away from this world that a hell I have made for my-
self and you

Oh! hasten the ending, sweet Christ; O Savior! to Thee
I sue.

AN IRISH EVICTION.

A FRAGMENT.

Long years have passed away since first I knew
This man whom on that day I, met and slew.
I was a child, he in the prime of life
A yeoman captain fond of blood and strife,
Sole owner of the land that stretched around
For miles and miles, and ever to be found
The poor man's foe. My father held of him
A few poor acres perched upon a grim
And desolate and sterile mountain side
From which he yet did manage to provide
Food for us all. Then troubled times came on,
The lawless soldiery rode up and down
Burning and slaying, torturing and worse
Till more than usual it seemed a curse

Had settled on our poor unhappy land.
One day this man surrounded by his band
Dashed to our cottage door; few words were said,
The rope was ready, and my father led
To where, before their purpose we divined,
His lifeless corpse hung swaying in the wind,
What followed on that night I need not say
Nor how they rode in hellish glee away,
And left us there surrounding the cold form
Of him for whom our tears fell fast and warm.
But when the winter came and earth did show
A cheerless countenance of frost and snow
We could not food provide and could not pay
This man the rent he asked, and so one day
He came, and levelling our cottage to the earth,
Drove us forth beggars, from our place of birth.
We went not far, but with the night returned
Back to our ruined home, and there we learned
It was forbidden relative or friend
To give us aid. Yea! and to shelter lend
Was in his eyes a crime that was so great
As to deserve in punishment our fate,
So that for us though many hearts were sore,
And wept and prayed they could do nothing more
Than weep and pray. So we were forced to grope
Among the ruins as if still with hope
To find some shelter there: Vain hope, alas!
That very night we were compelled to pass
Roofless beneath the cold and wintry sky,
Unsheltered, save what gave a hedge near by.
And when the morning dawned there did survive
But four of us from last night's wretched five,

And one, my mother, ere did dawn the day,
Worn out with suffering she could not stay,
Crazed by her orphaned children's cries for bread,
For warmth and shelter, her weak senses fled
And she became oh, horrible to see,
Mad ! yea ! sir, as mad as the world deems me
Next night there came with dreadful frost and snow,
A summons for our youngest child to go;
'Twas but an infant at the mother's breast,
Not strong, and cold and hunger did the rest ;
Its little life with a faint sob went out
And left it free from this world's pain and doubt
And left it free but left to us behind
Sorrow that could not any ceasing find.
Day broke again, a cold and cheerless day,
And in my mother's arms the infant lay ;
Its eyes were closed in what she thought was sleep,
Wondering she asked of us why we did weep
Bade us be still else would we wake the child
And as she rocked it in her arms oft smiled
And bade the babe sleep on. Then all would change
She'd seem to think such lengthened sleep was strange,
Notice how still the child was and how pale,
Speak to it fondly, and when that would fail,
Alarmed, she'd say her infant was unwell,
Then all the mother in her heart would swell
Into one burst of lamentable grief,
That soon in changing mood would find relief
For ere the tears had frozen on her cheek
She'd smile away her fears and softly speak
To her dead child again ; or kiss on kiss
Would lavish on its lips in mother's bliss,

Then press it frozen to her freezing breast
Bidding it drink or soothe its fancied rest,
With lullabies till faint her voice became
And still grew every motion of her frame,
The dreadful chill into her vitals crept,
And ere the nightfall cold in death she slept
Kind hands snatched hurriedly from earth a grave,
And dust to dust with few short prayers they gave
What little aid they could on us bestow
They gave us secretly, and bade us go
Far hence, if strength sufficient we could find
To bear us from a master so unkind.
And forth we two poor weeping children went,
My brother and myself, our footsteps bent
Forlorn and friendless, melancholy, slow
Through pathless wilds and trackless wastes of snow
Forced from the hand of charity to sue
For food and shelter, and forced often, too,
To sue in vain ; for dreadful famine lay
Upon the land, and whatsoever way
Our footsteps turned, there rose to heaven the cry
Of multitudes who did from hunger die,
So that at length when broad and blue and bright
The ocean broke upon our eager sight,
We hurried forward and with childish glee
Were floating soon upon its bosom free,
For near the shore, we chanced to find afloat
What once had been some fisherman's stout boat
In which we climbed and borne by wave and wind
The wretched land we soon left far behind.
Night passed away and day again did dawn,
And so until the third succeeding morn,

When, as I lay clasped in his fond embrace,
I saw the tokens in my brother's face,
That cold and hunger, sleeplessness and thirst,
Were soon in him about to do their worst;
His wan cheek flushed, his glazing eyes grew bright,
And shone a moment with unusual light,
I spoke, but he as one who heeded not,
Made no reply, but rising from the spot,
Stood still a moment, then with one faint cry
Fell down, and even at my feet did die.

CHARITY.

Remember when by thee a crust is thrown
With grudging charity unto the poor,
Blind Homer once was called an idle drone,
And Christ, the Master, begged from door to door.

CHRIST'S COMING ON EARTH.

Very likely if Christ lived today He would be called a crank and crucified over again.—Pittsburg Commoner.

I saw where on a time the Son of Mary
Again the burden of our flesh took on;
And in the guise of one with toil grown weary,
Came unto us weak, wasted, worn and wan.

It was the Sabbath, and the church bells mingled
Their solemn sounds with voices far within;
And of the many temples one He singled,
And through its lofty portals entered in.

Yet, though He heard His name in solemn phrases
Appealed to, as of men the hope and stay,
Full well He knew His name no hope there raises,
For naught save for things earthly did they pray.

And, as He stood there, of the purse-proud creatures
That upon silken cushions bent the knee,
Not one did pitying mark His wasted features
Nor in His own house bade Him welcome be.

So, forth He wandered but which way soever
His footsteps turned, the sound unto Him came
Of ribald voices that did each endeavor
To mingle imprecations with His name.

And shapes as if of women to Him proffered
Their sinful pleasures, leering in His face,
Unknowing Him who had His life blood offered
For even them so abject and so base.

And though of homes were many in that city,
Yet place He found not where to lay His head;
Harsh had men grown and so devoid of pity
That He was forced to make the street His bed.

Then with some few He found in Him believing,
And careless of their brothers' idle scorn,
He wandered forth intent upon relieving
The misery the world so long had borne.

And lo! Where'er His footsteps would have tarried
The hirelings of the law bade Him move on,
And subtle knaves would cunningly have parried
With scheming laws His tender words to man.

And as because He feared not force or scheming,
They haled Him off unto a loathsome jail,
Where creatures vile and creatures viler seeming,
Did cry in fellowship unto Him, "Hail !"

And uncomplainingly there long He labored,
Until at length His cruel jailers learned
That of the vile with whom He thus was neighbored
Some unto Him believing in Him turned.

Then forth they cast Him from His loathsome prison,
With warning He should from His mission cease,
But He who had for this to life arisen,
Went forth and ever cried to mankind, "Peace."

Then gathered round Him of the poor and lowly,
Full many trembling 'neath their burdens great,
And cast themselves before Him called Him "Holy."
And as of old He pitied their sad fate.

And spake to all men, yea ! with words of warning :
Bade, as of old, the rich again restore,
Their wealth to those who toiling night and morning,
To others gave what themselves needed sore.

But heed unto His warning none was given,
Nor ceased the rich to harry and to spoil;
Although He closed again the gates of heaven
To those who fattened on their brother's toil.

And lo! against Him wrathful and complaining,
The 'spoilers of the poor invoked the law,
The law themselves did break as if disdainning,
That they would have their brothers hold in awe.

Then Christ the merciful, the meek and tender
Was by the law's base creatures sore beset,
And was with what contumely they could render,
Dragged unto where their hireling Pilates met.

When over Him in judgment sat a being,
So base, so tainted with the lust for gain,
That unto every evil wish agreeing,
Justice might plead for Christ, and plead in vain.

And awning lawyers proffered aid unto Him,
But to His foes turned for a larger bribe,
Seeking with subtle pleadings to undo Him,
As is the custom ever with their tribe.

And as He stood there meek and uncomplaining,
From His mad enemies arose the cry:
"Give to our vengeance, Him who us disdainning,
Dared in the face of heaven our wealth decry."

And loudest there of those who did deny Him
Were those who aped His gentle words to man;
Yea! did with frantic tones cry, "Crucify Him,
Let not this devil walk the earth again."

Then to their vengefulness was flung the Savior,
And to the gallows-tree was swiftly borne,
Treated with more than ruffianly behavior,
Dragged through the mire unshaven and unshorn.

High they uplifted Him and placed the halter
About His neck, and scoffing bade Him pray,
Yea! bade him pray to Christ upon whose altar
Even His sin of sins might wash away.

And as He did but pray unto His Father,—
“Forgive Thou them, and bring unto them peace.”
Closer their cut-throats did around Him gather,
Clashing their arms and crying to Him “cease.”

And with Him knelt one hired to pray beside Him,
And loudly bade Him turn unto His God,
Spake of the mercy not to be denied Him.
Might He but humbly kiss the chastening rod.

Till as impatient did grow those around Him
He from the Savior's side did shuffle back,
And unto Christ the hangman came, and crowned Him
Like to the Crown of Thorns, with cap of black.

Then did I see where was the signal given,
And closed my eyes at the red lightning's gleam;
Earth rocked, seas moaned, the thunder rolled in
heaven,
And I awoke, for lo! it was a dream.

THE ORIGIN OF THE HARP.

—:o:—

Long ere its pride was in the dust laid low,
In Erin dwelt, two thousand years ago,
A chieftain who possessed a shrewish wife,
At once the pride and torment of his life,
Not evil hearted, her one fault alone
Was lack of patience ; could she but have known
How to have checked the sharpness of her tongue,
She had been held the choicest dame among
All Erin's housewives ; for none else so fair
There was among them ; but her beauty rare,
Joined as it was to virtue and to thrift,
Yea, and to many another precious gift,
Became as nothing in the eyes of those
To whom she did her single fault expose,
So that her husband, though a patient man,
Willing to bear all things that mortals can,

Yet to the blessed gods would often pray
That one or other they would take away,
For since this life exposed him to her jeers,
And to his fellow chiefs' and clansmen's sneers,
It seemed that nought in even Erin's isle
Could him to such a torture reconcile.

So followed it, that one day at her worst,
When more than ever with her madness curst,
He fled his house, and wandering to the sea
Sat down and wept in hopeless misery.
Not long he wept until a strange, sweet sound
He ne'er had heard before rose from the ground
Beside him, where the skeleton did lay
Of a huge fish swept shoreward in the bay.
But worn and wasted now by storm and sun,
With slender sinews that were web-like spun
From end to end, through which the breezes played,
And a soft strain of fitful music made.

Reaching his hand to draw it nearer still,
The frame fell shattered, nor could all his skill
Fix it together so that he again
Might hear that which had ne'er been heard till then
Long, long he listened, though the gentle breeze
Played o'er the fields and rustled through the trees ;
No voice rose upwards from that heap of bones,
More than was heard from the surrounding stones.

His thoughts diverted from his troubled life
By this, he for awhile forgot his wife ;

Forgot all else save a new-found desire
To solve the mystery, and with mind on fire,
It chanced, his fingers moving o'er the bones
And shrunken sinews, that the same sweet tones
That had so charmed him, only fainter yet,
And sweeter now, his ravished senses met.
Again, and yet again, his fingers crept
Over his instrument, till sudden swept
Into his mind the secret of its sound.
Not long he sought till he delighted found,
The hollow branch of an age-eaten tree,
That from its parent stem he twisted free,
Which trimmed to what did seem a proper length,
He half by patient skill, and half by strength,
Shaped it and bent it until it became,
Though rude, yet still in all a true harp frame.
Then from the skeleton that wind and tide
And many a summer sun had bleached and dried
He tore the sinews, and with cunning hand,
Fast fixed them to the frame his skill had planned.
His task completed, tremblingly he swept
His fingers o'er the chords, and then there leapt
From his rude instrument so loud a burst
Of melody, that what he heard at first
Seemed like the sighing of a summer wind
To that that winter's shrilling breath doth find.
Again, and yet again, and louder still,
The melody burst forth, the naked hill
Rising behind him steep, echoed it back,
The hills surrounding, like an eager pack
Of sweet-voiced beagles, catching at the sound,
Heard the sweet chorus and their voices found,

Till fainter, farther, sweeter yet it died,
And silence reigned on mountain and seaside.

Not now with heavy fingers did he sweep
Over the chords again, his sorrows deep,
Forgotten for awhile, were once again
Recalled to him, and wofullest of men
He sat by the seashore. The unwonted sound
That he the first of mortal men had found—
Waked all his sorrows, and his tears fell fast,
As o'er the chords his trembling fingers passed. :

But with this last faint, fitful sound
He heard a sob behind, and turning 'round
Saw where his wife had crept upon her knees,
Even beside him. Softer than the breeze
That sweeps o'er Erin from the sweet southwest
Were her soft sighs, as, hanging on his breast,
She begged him tenderly that he would still
Use that soft magic that, against her will,
Had brought her thither. Yes! so far had stirred
Her love and tenderness that not one word
That fitted not a fond, submissive wife
Would she give utterance to through all her life.

And as her wish, so was his willingness
To win by any means her fond caress ;
Nor wearied he, but played and played again,
Then home returned, the happiest of men.

And as had music changed her from a shrew
To gentlest of all wives, the story grew,

Into a proverb throughout all the isle,
That where was music nothing could defile
The peace and happiness of such a home,
Let what might else into that household come,
Misfortune, want, yea, though a greater ill
Might there seek lodgment, yet would music kill
All seeds of discord that might therein sow,
And let that proverbs truth all households show.

THE SOUL.

Out of the fathomless void, the soul
Into the world for a moment stole,
Lived, loved and labored, sorrowed, and then
Out of the world did steal again.

IN THE BLACK HILLS.

Did he die in his boots? Well, stranger, it's hard
To be asked such a question, and he my old pard,
A man as was grit clear away to his toes
And who valued his life about like his old clothes.
You see how it was, that there fellow he struck
Drew his shooter too quick. Well, that was his luck,
For Bill would have done it, but this chap from the
East

Looked so quiet and soft, that he hadn't the least
Sorter notion he'd do what the rest of the town
Wouldn't dare even think of, he'd so cowed them down.
But in spite of that, stranger, I saw him one day
Turn shaky and pale in a womanish way.
What's that? Was he frightened? Bill frightened?

No! No!

But I'll tell you it, stranger, just merely to show

That no matter how upstart and stiff we may feel,
There are times when the feelings of childhood will
steal

Right in on as sudden and leave us as weak
As a three-year-old baby; and, stranger, I speak
From experience, too, for that time, to my cost,
A hundred good ounces I may say I lost
By a moment's such weakness which happened to Bill,
My old pard, as lies buried out there on the hill.
You see we were hid in the brush and dry sage
All the day, on the watch for the eastward bound stage,
For Bill had got wind that from Deadwood that day
A government agent would start on his way
For the far eastern states, and such a chap must,
We knew, carry with him a good wheen of dust,
And beside there might be a rich miner or two,
So that Bill and myself thought the best thing to do
Would be to lie low and then sudden come down
And rake in their pile for our next spree in town.
So we lay there in patience till almost 'twas night,
When sudden and swift-like the coach shot in sight.
At the top of the hill and then rolled to its base,
And along o'er the plain to our snug hiding place.
Bill jumped and I followed, the leaders we dropped,
And in less than a minute the whole thing had stopped.
I minded the driver, he sprang to the door,
And let out a wild kind of unearthly roar,
There warn't no more needed, the passengers knew,
When they saw his Winchester what Bill meant to do.
Five men they were there looking scar't like and wild,
And a woman in black with her arms 'round a child;
A slim little thing of some three years or four,

And the child and her mother sat next to the door ;
And beside them the agent, and then a bent Jew,
And away in the corner a miner or two.
As I said, Bill had yelled in a manner quite loud,
And 'twixt that and his shooter so frightened the crowd
That when they were told to hand over the stuff,
Like the Jew, they all seemed to be ready enough,
Well, the agent was first to lay hold of his pile,
Which he handed to Bill with a weak sort of smile ;
Then the Jew, with "Mein Gott," then the miners, and last
That ere widow, a few silver pieces she passed
Out to Bill, who stood there and was yelling for more,
When stranger, that little kid stretched from the floor,
And twisting her lips into something like this,
Said to Bill, "Sir, stoop down and I'll give you a kiss."
Well, Bill wern't handsome, in fact I may say
That his eyes, stranger, looked each an opposite way,
He were bandy-legged too, and besides had red hair.
And his face were the shade of that rifle stock there,
So you see when that 'ere little hop-o-my thumb,
Looked up in his face he were almost struck dumb,
A minute he turned sorter red and then white,
And looked as if he weren't understanding it quite,
But seeing the mother, the miners and Jew
All staring hard at him and I staring too,
He stooped low, and lifting the cap from his head,
Kissed her twice where her pretty cheeks most had the
 red,
And then, stranger, durned if he didn't let fall
His cap and his rifle, his plunder and all,
And leaped to the ground and were off with a rush,
And the very next minute were lost in the brush.

THE LAST BLOW.

“Hello, Mary! How are you? What! crying again?
Why damn it! you women are always in pain
About something or other. Oh! ‘it’s late,’ is it? Late,
And you’re ‘tired and sick,’ and it’s so long to wait
Up for me all alone. Why, what do you think?
Can’t a man, when inclined, go out for a drink
Without some squalling woman should sit up all night
A-wasting her temper and wasting the light?
Come! get me some supper. Why, what’s that you say?
Neither you nor the children have eaten all day?
Why, you squandering jade! dare you sit there and
 speak,
After spending the money I gave you last week?
Oh! ‘it warn’t but five dollars,’ and part I ‘took back.’
Now look you here, woman, don’t you give me no slack;
There’s a devil within me that’s ugly to-night,
And I might do a deed—Come, come, it’s all right

If you'll only keep still, but you madden me so
 With your whining and tears that I sometimes don't
 know

How I manage to listen and keep my hands off.
 There, I knew it, with crying you've started your cough,
 And now you'll be sick. Well, cry if you will,
 It's nothing to me. Oh, there you are, still
 At the same old complaint—it wasn't so once.
 D'ye think I don't know it? Am I such a dunce
 That I should forget? Oh, of course I'm to blame,
 It is me, not my luck, that has dragged us to shame,
 And 'it all comes from drink.' Pooh! your very best men,
 When inclined to; have taken a drink now and then.
 Oh yes, but not too much,' Well, neither do I;
 But, hang it! you know I must drink when I'm dry,
 And, besides, it drowns sorrow. What's that? 'I was kind?'
 Well, so I'd be still if you'd only a mind
 To be quiet and decent and keep your tongue still.
 I don't want to quarrel. I know that you're ill,
 And the children are hungry. But what can I do?
 Ain't I hungry myself as often as you
 Or the children are, either? D'ye think that I'd eat
 And look at them starving? But where is the meat
 Or the bread I can get? Why, it seems you must
 think

I can get them for nothing. Oh, but I can get drink.'
 There, you're at it again. And what if I can?
 When a man is discouraged and knows that he's ran
 To the end of his luck, would you have him refuse
 A drink if he gets it? Oh, he mustn't abuse
 Himself with his drinking. D'ye think that I do?
 Don't I do what I can for the children and you?

D'ye think I'm contented to live in this hole,
 Or to dress in these rags? D'ye think I've no soul
 Or no pride in me left? I feel bad as you do
 When I think of what's come to the children and you.
 Why, it seems only yesterday you were as young,
 As light-hearted and handsome as any among
 The girls of this city; and now you are old
 And careworn and gray. Why, I thought myself bold
 When I first spoke of love and of marriage to you.
 And how happy I was that first day when I knew
 That you loved me in turn! And oh! how I vowed
 That I'd care for you, work for you, ever be proud -
 That I'd won you at last! Why, I'd give up my life
 To see you again the sweet, happy young wife
 You were in those days. Ah, but what is the use?
 Those times won't come back. Temptation was loose,
 And it caught me, and held me, and dragged me down low,
 And I ain't a man now. I'm a drunkard, I know;
 But it's too late to change, while they sell the cursed
 stuff.

I must have it, and will. I have struggled enough;
 But when every corner has it for sale,
 What's the use of my trying? It's only to fail.
 I've tried, I've resolved; but my thirst never stops.
 If you'd have me keep sober, why shut up the shops.
 Oh! you 'couldn't do that.' Well then, neither can I;
 But unless it is done I must drink till I die
 'Pray'? What good would that do? I tell you God's
 church

Isn't 'in it' with Satan's, He's left in the lurch;
 His churches are few and are closed on six days,
 And the parsons and priests are high-toned in their ways.

But the devil's ain't stylish ; they're out for the dust,
 And they're open and plenty, and it's business or 'bust.'
 But I'm dry with this talking, I must have a drink,
 Only one, Mary, one ; I can't sleep a wink
 Without taking a nightcap. Oh come ! none of that
 Don't think that you'll stop me by taking my hat.
 Stand aside from the door ! Get out of my way !
 Don't try to prevent me—don't do it, I say.
 Oh, you will ? Now look here ! I don't want a fuss,
 You know I was never a man for a muss ;
 But a drink I must have, and have it I will.
 I've had the blues bad, and I must try to kill
 The down-hearted feeling I've had all the day
 Let me go ! Let me go ! Get out of my way
 Or I'll strike you, I'll strike you !—You will have it ?
 There !
 Take that, damn your soul ! I told you take care."

"Well, I've had the drink, Mary, yes, two—yes, and
 three,
 H'm ! you're lying there yet. Well, what's that to me ?
 You can lay there all night if you feel so disposed ;
 But I'm going to bed, for the barrooms are closed,
 And I'm broke. Oh, you're sulky ; you won't even
 speak ;
 You've got your own temper for all you're so meek.
 Come ! get on your feet. Do you hear what I say ?
 I won't have it—I won't let you have your own way !
 Get up ! You won't answer ? Don't tempt me again.
 You'll be sorry, I tell you, I tell you. Well, then—
 No, I won't, not again. I won't strike, you, I say ;
 But what is the use of your acting this way ?

You know it is foolish. Get up!—O my God!

What's this at your head? Why, Mary, it's blood!

Whose blood? What's the matter? O my girl!—O
my wife!

Won't you speak to me,—answer me,—show you've got
life?

I was tempted too far. I won't strike you again.

I won't drink, won't be angry. Why don't you speak
then?

Won't you answer me, dear? Has your love for me
fled?

Won't you speak to me, Mary?—Oh. my God! she is
dead!"

FAMINE.

—: o :—

IRELAND 1846.

———

You are lying there my darling, you are lying there my
child,
With the famine in your sunken cheek, and in your eye
so mild ;
Alas ! I see your outstretched hands, and I hear your
whisper low,
As meekly you do ask for food, and I must answer—No.

I have no food, I have no hope, but all the livelong day
I wander up and down the road, and try to drive away
The bitter thoughts of hunger, the weeping, starving
land,
And look in vain for charity from some kind feeling
hand.

But there's no kindness in the hearts of the wealthy or
the proud,
For when they see our suffering, and our anguish cries
aloud,
With scowling eye they pass us by, or drive us from
their door
As though it were a crime to be, as we are darling, poor.

This morning I was weary, and I sat by yonder gate,]
When, lo! from out the castle rode the lord of the estate,
Bright, scarlet-coated huntsmen encircled him around
And my hungry eyes looked enviously on many a well-
fed hound.

I thought he looked so happy and he laughed with so
much glee,
Perhaps some pity he might take, my child on you and
me;
I rose, with trembling footsteps I approached his horse's
head,
And then in faltering accents, I humbly begged for
bread.

But oh, my child! 'twas useless and it's well I might
have known
How foolish 'twas for me to try to touch that heart of
stone,
For turning round he jeered at me, then calling to his
men,
He bade them scourge me from his gate, should I beg
there again.

Then passed me by with all his rout, away to hunt the
deer

And I, who'd have returned his blow, was stricken at his
jeer ;

Thus jesting at my bitter want, this great lord by me
swept,

And I, a hungry, starving wretch sat in the dust and
wept.

And long I sat in silence, in the hot and dusty road,
And thought how happy they must be who never wanted
food—

His dogs, the very hunted deer had never known the
pangs,

The torments of the hunger rack that tore me with its
fangs.

And then my child I cursed him, with wicked oaths and
dread,

I prayed that he might know full soon the bitter want of
bread,

I said alas ! that God himself was cruel and unjust,
Else would he never see His poor ground down into the
dust;

But the form of thy dear mother seemed before me then
to rise

As pale as when in death's last sleep she gently closed
her eyes,

And with a look of mild reproach and with voice that
seemed to chide,

She bade me live in patience and the will of God abide.

“For know thou vain and foolish man that over heaven
and earth.

There reigns a Judge who values not wealth, power or
noble birth,

Who for the good has rich rewards, for the ill a chasten-
ing rod.

And is as our deservings are, a just but kindly God.

“Nor murmur thou, if yet in toil and sorrow thou must
dwell,

For what the Lord is pleased to send assuredly is well;
The poor, the lowly and the meek whose earthly days are
given

To prayer and toil and suffering, are His chosen ones in
heaven.”

I saw her not, 'twas but a dream, a dream that passed
away,

And again upon the roadside a hungry man I lay;
A hungry man whose starving child at home all pale and
white

Lay patiently in waiting for the last, last, good night.

But though the famine tear my heart, and I see thee in
thy pain,

I yet will bow to God's good will and not rebel again;
And though our burdens in this life may seem too hard
to bear,

Yet will I see in all He sends, His kind protecting care

But why art thou so ghastly white, and why this hurried
breath?

It cannot be, my child! my child! O tell me tis not death.
O speak to me but once again; smile on me, do not leave
Thy father here a wretched man upon this earth to grieve.

Thy mother and thy brother, but two short weeks ago
Were taken from my struggling arms, and now are lying
low.

Remember that thou art to me the only one that's left.
Of the once happy household of which I've been bereft.

Thou wert the dearest one to me, the one I loved the best,
I thought that thou at least might stay when God took
all the rest;

But now thy breath comes hurriedly, thy eyes are rolling
wild,

Oh! leave me not my darling, leave me not my dearest child!

'Tis useless, all is over; ended is the long, long pain,
And those whom I have loved, on earth I ne'er will see
again,

The bounding, joyous footsteps, the voice I loved to hear,
Will no more greet, with music sweet, my sadly listen-
ing ear.

Thus one by one, they all are gone, far from this world of
strife,

And I am left, alone, bereft of children and of wife,
Alone, oh Gracious God above! of Thee I ask this boon,
Since Thou hast taken my loved ones, grant I may follow
soon.

THE SLAYING OF EIDIRSKOLL BY CUCULAIN.

—: o :—

(Adapted from the *Tain Bo Cuailgne*.)

[The *Tain Bo Cuailgne*, or Cattle Spoil of Cooley, is one of the oldest, as it is the greatest, of Irish heroic tales. It relates the history of the invasion of Ulster by the forces of Queen Maeve in the century before the birth of Christ. Cuculain, being on a visit into Meath, escapes the spell which has been cast over Ulster, or Ulidia, and which rendered all its inhabitants stupid. Following on the track of Maeve's army, he assails it mightily while they are gathered around the camp fires, and with his sling does terrible execution. Failing in their attempts to slay or capture him, Maeve's chiefs enter into a treaty with him by which they engage to march no further northward until he is slain by some of their champions, one of whom he is to fight each day. On the track of his friend, Fergus Mac Roy, who is Maeve's envoy, follows secretly Eidirskoll, a simple youth, intending to slay Cuculain.]

This was it, then, who following Fergus fast,
Saw him by Sualtam's son with tears received,
Saw how Cuculain joyed to think at last
The wished delay by him had been achieved,
Then saw them parting, Fergus as one grieved,
His friend must die or long delay ensue.

Then when his steps had Fergus far retrieved,
Stepped from his shelter, and when full in view,
Said : " Lo ! have I come from far, Cuculain. to see you.

“And having seen me,” then said with a smile,
Cuculain, gazing on the simple youth,
“Dost thou then think that it were worth thy while
To come so far?” Nay, truly, in good sooth,
I know not,” said the other, “to say truth,
Though thou art not uncomely as a man,
Nor seemeth in thy manners so uncouth
As Fergus and his friends, who, when they can,
Check me in act or speech, though mighty is my clan.

“Yet though thou art unwarlike to the eye,
Or scarcely to be marked ’mongst men of note,
I, having heard in praise of thee men vie,
And whom my father’s death will soon promote
To headship o’er my clan, do thee devote
To slaughter at my hands—enough for thee.
Of glory will accrue if, by me smote,
Thou diest. If so, haply, men may say,
Thee mighty Eidirskoll scorned not with sword to slay.

“And what thy gain?” Cuculain said, “if thou
Shouldst slay me who did never do thee ill?
“No more,” said Eidirskoll, “as is said now,
Will men say I do lack a warrior’s skill;
Yet if thou wishest so to bend thy will
As to become a captive unto me
I will accept submission, though I still
Would rather thou wouldst fight, since I tell thee
My name and fame I wish to live eternally.”

“ Youth, thou art foolish thus in quest of fame
To risk in mortal combat this, thy life;
For to thee, dead, what boots an idle name
Or any honor gained in earthly strife?
If thou hast, haply, children and a wife,
Or parents dear, think thou of them instead,
For, sharper than the sudden stroke of knife,
To them will tidings come that thou art dead;
Oh, think thou! what tears will they then unavailing
shed.

“ Nor, to thee dead will come an after-birth,
Since short and single is the life of man;
And this dear land, the sweetest spot on earth,
Thy loved ones or the warriors of thy clan,
No more thy eyes delightedly will scan,
Nor though ten thousand thousand years may run
Their course, if so of old the gods did ban,
Nought will to thee be rise or set of sun,
Who through all time will lie in grave so drear and dun.

“ Though there be pleasures then as there are now,
What will they be to thee when thou art dead?
Though thou with glory doth thy name endow,
What profits thee when low is laid thy head?
Alas, to slave or gentle born and bred,
Alike oblivion comes; and honor, fame,
With which in life our waking thoughts are fed,
Cannot awake us, nor disgrace nor shame,
Should thou esteem it to make length of life thy aim.

“ And since if thou shouldst gain what thou dost seek,
It profits not to thee when in the grave ;
Consider what thy loss if thou art weak
And lose that victory that thou wouldst have.
All cannot victors be, though all be brave,
Since fate ordains that some one side must lose;
Therefore, I bid thee, youth, thy strength to save,
And since the gods have given thee to choose,
Would have thee not thy life with foolish toils abuse.”

Thus spake Cuculain, as with subtle art
He wishing not the simple youth to slay,
Belied the sentiments of his own heart
And cried down that for which he wished alway.
But Eidirskoll, who deemed he shunned the fray
Because he feared such trial to invoke,
Reviled him, and since neither yea nor nay
Cuculain answered, into anger broke,
And with his sharp sword drawn dealt him a sudden
stroke.

But, parrying the blow, Cuculain struck
Back at him more to daunt him than to wound,
And shore away the golden apple stuck
Behind his head, and his long tresses bound.
But since his gentleness in vain he found,
His anger rose, and so the other died ;
And after, at the base of a low mound,
He buried him, and on a tree beside,
In Ogham letters, carved his name and country wide.

And that night when the moon had risen high,
And one by one the stars in heaven came forth,
He sat beside where Eidirskoll did lie,
And sadly gazed upon the upturned earth;
Grief filled his heart for him who in the dearth
Of sweet companionship he wished not dead.
His idle chatter seemed but harmless mirth,
And loneliness within him the thought bred,
That happier was the slain within his narrow bed

UNBIDDEN.

As when we wishing some familiar name
To speak but cannot, strive we as we may,
Look foolish and our treacherous memories blame,
When all unsought it comes another day.

So, may a song some poet long ago
Did vainly strive to sing and left unsung,
Hover for ages, where, we do not know,
Then leap unbidden from another's tongue.

THE BROTHERS.

—: o :—

Two brothers, Lazarus and Dives,
Had lived estranged through all their lives,
For Dives to lowly men was stern
And ever did meek Lazarus spurn—
Had robbed him of his share of wealth ;
Had robbed him slowly and by stealth
Of freedom, happiness, and fame,
Till Lazarus his slave became.

Higher, higher swelled his pride,
With garments gold and purple-dyed,
With perfumed locks and dimpling chin
That told how well all was within
He strode through life with not a thought
That brother's ill this good had bought ;
Nor summer's sun, nor winter's cold,
Could torture him, for twenty-fold
Did Lazarus, his brother toil
The seasons' rude extremes to foil.

And, day by day, the earth more fair
Seemed unto Dives; the very air
Was softer, milder than of old,
And his content grew with his gold,
So that he trod the ways of earth,
A happy man and full of mirth,
Upon whose ear did never jar
The groans of Lazarus from afar.

And holy men came round about
And banished from him every doubt;
“What must be is, what is is just,
And soul alike with clay is dust;
There is no hell for men to fear,
Except what hell hath Lazarus here.
And false the Master’s words that say
The needle’s eye is broader way
To burdened camel than the gate
Of paradise to soul elate,
With all its earthly mem’ries still
Of gold and jewel, bond and bill,
And since God helps who helps himself,
How blest is holy Dives’ pelf!”

So blest, grew ever greater Dives,
But on his slave the festering gyves
Pressed closer ever than before,
Until his anguished spirit sore
Cried to his master for relief
Or respite for a moment brief;

But vain that cry, for like a flame
Now quickly sped the power and fame
Of mighty Dives, 'till he alone
Ruled this green earth as 'twere his own ;
Nor murmur rose, although his sway
With keener pangs was felt each day.
For Dives, the wealthy, Dives the great,
Had now a greed no gain could sate,
And scrupled not with fire and sword
To ravage earth, that so his hoard
Of ill-got gains might greater grow
With spoils from him he called his foe.
Earth smiled with plenty, Dives took all,
And famine brought him gains not small ;
His wars were ill, his peace was worse,
His friendship proved to men a curse ;
His smile, his frown, his good, his ill,
Alike to men proved evil still ;
And all God's blessings came in vain
To those content to slaves remain.

So years passed on and Dives grew old,
And died and left behind his gold ;
Not even Lazarus, his slave,
Could he bear with him to the grave ;
But naked died as he at first
From nothingness to life had burst.
And though for him did organ roll,
And though for him did church-bell toll,
Yet swifter far from earth arose
The many groans of Lazarus,

Of Lazarus, who, still a slave,
Toiled on, as wanting will to brave
Even him who now usurped the place
Of Dives, the spoiler of his race.
Toiled on, then passed away from earth,
Forgotten, as of little worth,
A man whose sighs, whose toils, whose tears
Evoked no sigh, for still men's ears
Were deafened with the praise of him
Once Lord of Lazarus' life and limb.
Toiled on, then passed away and left
Behind him children, too, bereft
Of freedom, happiness and fame,
The heirs to nothing but his shame,
And that was all, for they lived, too,
And died as lived a slavish crew.

THE BOHEMIANS.

—: o :—

“ Ha, Fritz, old fellow! what, don’t know me ?
Don’t know Jack Harker you used to see
At the head of the Momus Club that met
In the “ fifties ’ here. You don’t know yet ?
You ought to. Often you’ve scratched your pate
When I told you to scratch it down on the slate.
Ah, now you know ; that’s hearty. Shake.
Well, mine is beer. And what’ll you take ?

“ So, Fritz, you’ve got the old place still.
I’m glad of it. Come, fill man, fill ;
What’s that ? No trust ? Confound you, there
Don’t mind the change. You will, I swear.
I’ve no more need of tick, old man ;
I can settle, too, all the scores I ran,
In fact, Fritz—now, you needn’t stare—
Out West I’m known as a millionaire.

"Ah, me, what happy days we spent
Within these walls. For youth had lent
A charm to life that since had died.
Our hopes were high and the world was wide;
We'd friends, too. Though these last, to be sure,
Were like ourselves—most always poor.
Well, well; 'tis useless to wish them back,
Time never takes to the backward track.

"We had genius, too, or, at least, some had,
And yet—I don't know how it was, my lad—
We were beaten to death in the race for fame
By stupid fellows whose only aim
Was to plod and plod, but who held their grip
On the very things that we let slip.
Well, life at best is but up and down;
Content, after all, is the true renown.

"There was Brown, the artist; he's painting signs.
We thought him a genius; and then there was Hines,
Whose last success was a marble group:
Shakespeare reading to some of his troupe.
And there was the fellow for whom I wrote
My 'Tasso,' but never a single note
Of his promised music did we hear
For he'd grown at length too fond of your beer.

"Then there was the Irishman, young McCue,
Who had planned an epic at twenty-two,
'Brian Boru and the field of Clontarf,'
Ah! he was the fellow to make you laugh

Or cry as he pleased. My eyes grow dim
Whenever I get to thinking of him.
For in 'Sixty-one' he went to the war
And died my colonel in 'Sixty-four.'

"There was Robbins, too, who read one day
'Thomas a Becket,' a five-act play.
We called him Shakespeare—thought it strong—
But the managers said it was windy and long.
Myself had a comedy, too, on the stocks
About that time ; but it ran on the rocks
As soon as launched, and I wrote no more,
Whilst Robbins is writing still at three score.

"There were exiles, too, from every land,
Broad-browed fellows and strong of hand,
A German who preached of the people's wrongs,
A Frenchman who wrote the daintiest songs ;
An Irishman fleeing in 'Forty-eight'
From a famished land and a felon's fate;
And a dozen others, the most of whom
Lie, with their wrongs, in the silent tomb.

"So, Fritz, fill up, the stuff is light ;
But we'll drink no other thing to-night.
Ah ! would I could see beside me here
The same old fellows who drank your beer.
And—I know 'tis foolish—you'll say its drink ;
But, Fritz, I sometimes can't but think,
I'd give half the millions I possess,
If that comedy only had proved a success."

THE ORPHANS.

—: o :—

A Christmas Story; adapted from Victor Hugo.

The cold, gray morning, breaking from the east,
A glimmering light shot through the window pane,
Where sat the fisher's wife with heart opprest,
And straining eyes bent outward on the main.

So had she sat long hours, deprived of sleep,
Whilst angrily the waves broke on the shore;
For Baptiste, her beloved, was on the deep,
And much she feared she ne'er would see him more.

But see! from out the mist comes stealing slowly
His small, frail craft; then strikes upon the land,
And she, with eyes that shone with love-light holy,
Rushed eager forth to meet him on the strand.

One long embrace, one short and silent prayer,
And then they turned along the pathway, home,
She leading on with heart now free from care,
For, spite of storm and darkness, he had come.

Seated at length beside his own bright fire,
His dripping nets into a corner cast,
"Good wife," he said, "last night there seemed a choir
Of furious devils howling in the blast.

'All night the rain was beating in my face
Until I almost wept for very pain ;
All night the white-capped waves did run a race,
And in the sea I cast my nets in vain.

"Yet though my toil did gain for you no food,
I am content since I again am here ;
My heart leaps up and I in joyful mood
Laugh at the dangers which I nothing fear."

Shyly she answered : "Baptiste, dear, last night
Our neighbor died ; poor creature, I alone
Sat by her side until her glazing sight
Sudden grew dull and heavy as a stone.

Two little children has she left behind :
William, a boy, and Madeline, the girl ;
Both young and pretty, as you'd hope, to find,
With round blue eyes and many a flaxen curl

At this grew Baptiste grave, and casting down
His old fur bonnet, wet with sea and rain,
Muttered, the while he scratched his shaggy crown :
“ Two to our five makes seven. H'm, that's plain,

“ Too often now we hungry go to rest,
For storms will rage long weeks upon the sea.
Well,—well, I'll nothing say. God must know best ;
'Tis His good will, and that we know must be.

“ Go, fetch them dear ; they will be frightened sore,
If with the dead alone they waken thus.
Hark! 'tis the mother knocking at our door,
Fear not ; they will be children unto us.

“ They will soon learn to play about our floor,
They will soon learn to climb upon my knee,
And God above, to fill these two mouths more
Will fill my nets with more fish from the sea.

“ We must work harder, we must drink no wine,
Our plot of ground with greater care must till
So fear not, Janet, for these five of thine.
But go rejoicing since 'tis His good will.

“ Why, Janet, lass, thy feet are surely tied ;
Why dost thou linger by that curtain there ?”
But, smiling, Janet drew it then aside
And said : “ Behold ; already they are here.”

THE DEAD CHIEFTAIN.

——: o :——

IRELAND, A. D. 16—.

See where he lies before our eyes, my hands his cold ones
clasping,
Who fell last night in bloody fight, his sword hilt grimly
grasping.
No more he'll urge us on to chase the wild deer swiftly
speeding;
No more he'll cheer us to the fight, himself the battle
leading.

His fair white brow is bloody now, his lips will open
never;
His blue eyes bright have lost their light; his smile has
gone forever.
No more he'll cheer us in our gloom, or give us friendly
greeting;
No more, no more! his spirit now afar from us is fleeting,

The wintry sleet on him doth beat where, shelterless, he's
lying;

Even Mother Earth that gave him birth seems now a
grave denying.

No marble will his bones encase, no tablet tell his story;
No minstrel o'er his shallow grave will ever chant
his glory.

Yet he who lies in this poor guise, with none but us be-
side him

To shield his form from wind and storm, or in the grave
to hide him,

Was bravest once amongst the brave and great amongst
the greatest,

And to draw sword for motherland was not the least or
latest.

Whose wide roof spread above his head for many a rood
around him,

He lived to hide in watchful-eyed unrest where nightfall
found him.

To hunger, thirst, go meanly clad—oh, God above! why
was it?

That Thou who art so merciful and just, that Thou shouldst
cause it?

His clansmen slain; his chosen train of warriors dead or
banished;

All, all, save we, he lived to see every high hope vanished,

To see the land he loved so well, in spite of each endeavor,
Bound firmly with the tyrant's chains, and bound, alas,
 forever!

So lay him low beneath the snow—let wintry blasts howl
 o'er him;

Let foemen tread above his head who oft times fled before
 him;

And fly we too, who yet, alas! can have no hope in flying,
Since hunger, sword or torture soon will leave us dead or
 dying.

UNDESERVED.

The trickster's name, the slaughterer's deeds, adown the
 stream of time

Have sailed with, aye, increasing force, and now are
 hailed sublime.

Though one did labor but to see his fellow-creatures
 slaves,

The other toiled with sweat and blood to leave behind
 him graves.

EVICTED.

—:o:—

[Patrick McManus, County Cork, Ireland, evicted from the land on which he was born and the house which he himself had built, died soon afterwards from want and exposure.]—London "Justice."

Out of his cabin they dragged him to die,
Out on the road, 'neath the wintry sky,
And the chilling winds and the rain from heaven
Beat out the life that his God had given,

Abel to Cain—over again
Did brother appeal to brother in vain;
But Cain to Abel—the cruel blow
Laid the defenceless brother low.

Eighty years on the bleak hillside
Had he toiled from morning till eventide;
Ploughed and planted and watched with care
To reap for himself a pittance bare.

And now that his trembling limbs refused
To bear the burden as once they used,
Armed and guarded the spoilers came
With boasting to do the deed of shame.

Vainly to them through his blinding tears
Did he appeal—not his eighty years,
His scant gray locks, his thin, bent form,
Could avert from him the coming storm.

Chill blew the winds, the day grew dim,
But day or night was one to him;
Over at length were his labors long,
And over the cruel spoiler's wrong.

Over for him, but he left behind
Others to suffer, of human kind,
Others to suffer and deem it long
Ere the right would triumph over the wrong.

But we are many, our masters few,
United our strength can theirs undo;
And better than want is to die in fight,
Unite then, brothers, unite, unite!

MUSTERED OUT.

—:o:—

A hundred men from our village went
To fight for the Union on Southern plains,
And of ninety-nine the villagers' blood
Ran freely coursing through each man's veins

But one there was, the hundredth man,
A ragged fellow whom nobody knew,
Who had come to town but the other day,
Looking, he said, for something to do.

But the government rations or government pay
Had taken his fancy, or so it was said,
And he 'listed, filling our company up,
Though we'd rather 'twere one of our boys instead

And now, when the last sad kiss was given,
The last word spoken, the last hand clasped,
No kiss met his, no word was spoken,
And his hand no one in friendship grasped.

For flesh and blood of all were going
Where few or none might return again ;
And who could think of the tramp and stranger
When hearts were sore for our own loved men.

Three years then followed, three years of battle,
Where our loved ones had done their share,
And the hundred strong and stalwart fellows
Were now reduced to a handful bare,

A little handful whom toil nor fever,
Nor prison torture nor fight could kill ;
And we, their mothers, their wives and sweethearts,
Prayed God to preserve them from future ill.

Then came the day when we knew to-morrow,
Their service ended, they home would start ;
And, oh ! how we counted the hours and minutes
And the weary miles that did still us part.

That morrow came, and another morrow
Into our village the tidings brought
Of a deadly grapple twixt Grant and Lee,
Where a hundred thousand on each side fought.

A fierce, wild battle, where shadows ever
In gruesome forests made night of day,
Till scarce could be seen which was friend or foe,
Or who did the the thrust of the bayonet slay.

And all that we knew, or cared, if knowing,
Was that the regiment of our men
Had suffered, the papers said, "heavy losses,"
But would on the morrow turn home again.

Then into our village, next week, from southward
The heavy train came rumbling slow,
Stopped still a moment, one long, shrill whistle,
Then started, O God ! how we felt the blow.

For out of the train but one man tottered
And died on our lips the welcoming shout ;
One man, not of ours, but the vagrant stranger,
And Company G was mustered out.

—: o :—

TACT.

Filled with all virtues, wishing only good,
One lives unhappy, dies misunderstood,
His fellow, smoother, without one good thought,
Gains undeserving what the other ought.

THE FACTORY BELL.

—: o :—

When the heat of the sweltering night is gone,
And the cool of the morning hath come at last,
When the flowers have bared their dewy breasts,
And the bees go flitting among them fast;
When the distant low of the kine is heard,
And the cock's shrill call from afar doth swell,
The mill girl starts in her restless sleep,
And awakes at the sound of the factory bell.

She hears the bell, but it brings no joy,
For it calls her not to the fields and flowers;
It calls her away to the stifling mill,
Where beside the loom she must stand long hours,
In dust and grime she must stand long hours,
Till her limbs sink down and her tired brain reels
And hope, ambition, and love and joy
Are lost in the maddening whirr of the wheels.

Without, the river goes flashing by,
Where the careless boatmen are drifting down,
And across the river and far away
The long-ridged hillocks stretch bare and brown;
But, free and idle, beneath the sun,
Of food and shelter they have no thought,
While she must slave for her daily bread,
O, dearly, by her life's anguish bought.

Nor morning, noon nor night she knows
The blessed rest of these soulless things.
God's image—she lives but to come and go,
As to come and go the mill bell rings.
The senseless creatures have food and rest,
But she, for whom Christ's blood was shed,
Must oft at the sound of the factory bell
Pawn body and soul for a piece of bread.

—: o —

THE IRONY OF FAME.

The proudest empires live but as a name,
Almost forgotten mighty conquerors lie,
But, O! such irony there is in fame,
The song hath life, the singer will not die.

THE NAZARENE.

—: o:—

Jerusalem, A. D. 33.

Aye! up to the cross with the Nazarene cur,
Let no feeling of pity within your hearts stir;
But with mock and with gibe and with curses and blows
Let us greet him as upward the mountain he goes.

Low, ragged and mean like a beggar he came,
With the leper consorting, the blind and the lame;
With his love for the rabble and tears for the low,
He hath dared of ourselves oft to prophecy woe.

He hath broken our laws, he hath spurned at our rules,
He hath mocked at our teachings and made us as fools,
Yea! with ruffians about him, hath scourged from its
place
In the porch of the temple the thrift of our race.

And the wealthiest, wisest, and noblest grew pale
When they saw how the multitudes cried to him, "Hail!"
How the Jew and the Gentile, the bondman and free
Gathered 'round him in numbers, as sands of the sea.

But revenge now is ours, the unholy despairs;
We have trapped him with questions and set him with
 snares,
We have bribed his friend, Judas, and praise the Most
 High.
To us Pilate hath hearkened and left him to die.

Lo! he comes, crowned with thorns; on his shoulders
 the cross,
With his followers 'round him lamenting his loss,
Closer press, strike Him down, adding insult to death,
Let our voices exultingly greet his last breath.

He is dead! He is gone! Raise the triumph again;
No more will he mock at our teachings to men,
And like His be their fate who would mock at our rule,
Let them die as this Jesus hath died—like a fool.

—:o:—

AFTER DEATH.

Can it be, then, when looking on the dead,
We say, distracted betwixt hope and doubt,
The spirit that was here has nowhere fled,
But like the taper's light has been blown out.

A LESSON.

—: o :—

When Jesus came from Nazareth
To teach His gospel unto men,
Contumely and a felon's death
They did return unto him then.

Yet, though he knew what was the fate
Their hatred had for him in store,
He did not in his zeal abate,
But only prayed and taught the more.

So, ye who follow Him far off,
And would teach men a lesson, too,
Heed not the unbeliever's scoff,
Nor fear what harm their hate can do.

And if thou should'st allay the strife
That rends the earth, know thou hast won,
If thou should'st fail, and lose thy life,
Thou hast at least thy duty done.

And at the most thou canst but live
A little while in grief and tears,
Whilst nature did to mankind give
A whole eternity of years.

And what is one when many need
The wisdom thou perchance canst teach,
A forest springs from one small seed,
A million hearts thy words may reach.

And truth is truth, and right is right
And never should their cause be lost,
Then up, be valiant in the fight,
Nor coward wait to count the cost.

—: o :—

WEALTH AND SONG.

Remember ye who boast the wealth ye own,
Deeming the age nought else can worthy find,
Rich men were they whose names are now unknown,
While Homer lived who was a beggar blind.

BABYLON.

—: o :—

[Written on reading "The Bitter Cry of Outcast London."]

I stood where far below in darkness lay
Great Babylon ; betwixt us was a cloud
Through which might pierce nor eye nor light of day ;
Yet ever from beneath that dismal shroud
Rose cries tumultuous, clamoring and loud—
Strange sounds of wailing, and, with laughter gay,
Hoarse notes of anger, oaths and noise of fray,
With the far murmur of a mighty crowd.

A strong breeze blew, and from that human fen
The black pall was a moment swept aside ;
And I, mad multitudes of starving men,
Saw lift wan faces to the heavens wide
And vainly cry for food. I looked again,
Arms clashed—but more the clouds again did hide.

TRUE GREATNESS.

—:o:—

To be a martyr in a prospering cause,
To give thy life up, even at the stake,
When knowing that thy agony will wake
To action those the tyrant bade to pause
Ere they 'gainst him would arm ; to know the laws
Condemning thee thy very death will break,
And that ere long thy torturer will quake
Because of thee, amid his slaves applause.

Many and weak men have to this aspired,
But when thou darest death where thou alone,
Are with thy torturers, where none are fired
By thy example and thy last moan
Falls upon ears of those to slay thee hired,
Then hast thou truly strength and greatness show

THE GOD OF ALL MEN.

—:o:—

“There is a God,” exclaimed the Hindoo meek,
“Will loose the chains that round our limbs are tied.”
“There is a God who will for us provide,”
Said they who starved in Connemara ‘bleak.
“There is a God will strengthen us, so weak,”
The wretched fellaheen of Egypt cried.
“There is a God that doth with us abide,”
The tyrants whine, “and grants us what we seek.”

O, man! what God is this, that thou dost deem
Is all to all men? or art thou so base
As thus to willingly thy God blaspheme?
Free will was given thee, means and time and place
To help thyself; then do thou not further dream
Of further aid to speed thee in the race.

DREAMS.

—: O : —

My years are wasted, and the deeds that I
Would fain have done are unperformed by me ;
The golden heights that I far off did see,
And thought to climb, do still beyond me lie.
My bark , whose flag I proudly thought to fly
O'er undiscovered seas, near shallows wrecked,
My name the age's chronicles neglect,
And soon I must unknown, unhonored die.

Ambition ! why wilt thou still visit those
Who have no fitting place to house thee in ?
Why wilt thou tempt ? by saying " High they rose,
Many who nought possessed save will to win."
Why wilt thou come at all to those whose minds
Do fit them but to dwell with common hinds ?

IRELAND.

— : O : —

Like to the Titan stretched upon the peak
Of hoar Caucasus, Erin, thou dost lie
In silent agony. From thee no cry
Is heard of faint entreaty : the vultures beak
Tearing thy heartstrings hath not made thee speak
That word of base submission that would buy
Ransom from thy fell tyrant's cruelty.
Yea, though in hapless bondage and too weak
Thyself to free, thou hast not hopeless been ;
But on an on, through all thy centuries long
Of cruel torture, thou didst count it sin
To bend thy will unto the spoiler strong,
But struggled, certain that at length would win
Thy feeble right against his mighty wrong.

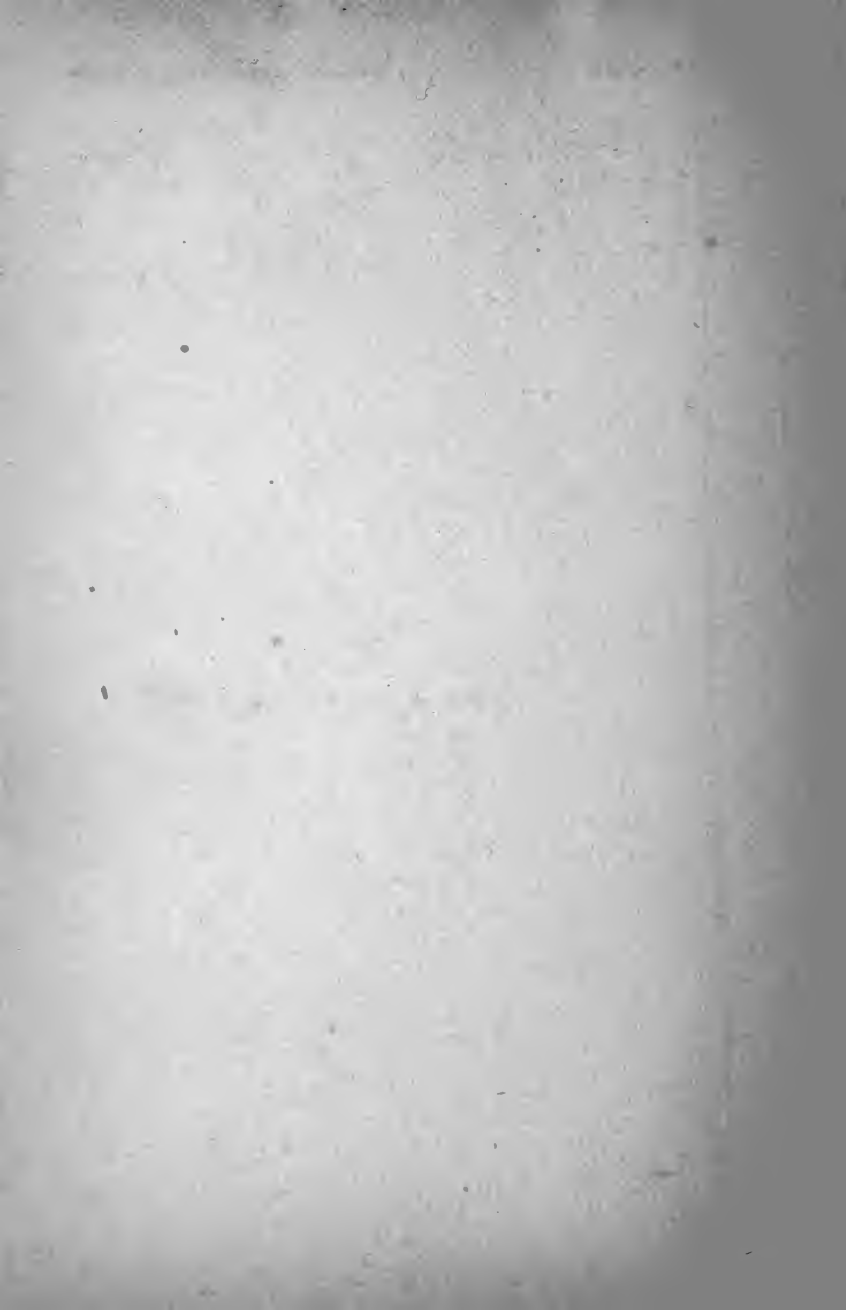
TO CHRIST.

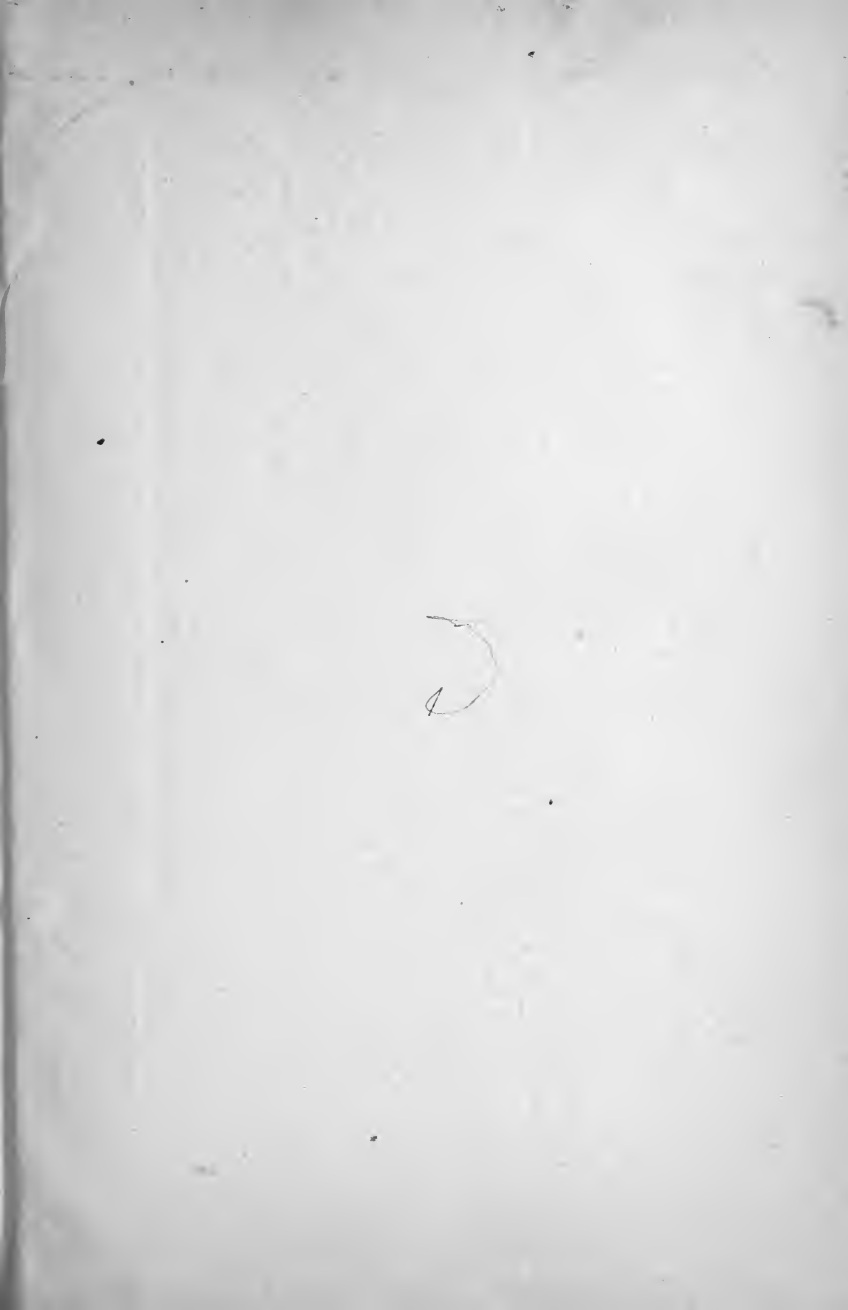
—:O:—

When Jewish bigotry and Roman pride,
Intent on thy destruction, were allied ;
 When still thy dying eyes could faintly see
 Those thou didst give thy life for mock at Thee ;
When from the spear wound in thy stricken side
Thy sacred blood streamed down, a crimson tide,
 Faint, gasping, breathless, stretched upon the tree,
 Still merciful thou blessed Christ couldst be
And though all earthly power to act was thine.
 Thyself to free, Thy savage slayers slay,
Thou didst thyself into their hands resign,
 As thou wert nothing more than common clay,
Yea! made thy very death to be a sign
 Thy promised kingdom was not far away.

THE END.







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